

Parent Topics

Serving Alcohol To Teens: It's Unsafe, Illegal, And Irresponsible

(NAPS)—Most teens who drink get their alcohol from “social” sources—parents of other teens, older siblings, and other relatives and friends. People who provide alcohol to teens undermine the efforts of parents to protect their kids from alcohol-related injury, and also break the law.

A new national campaign to reduce underage drinking is focusing on “social sources” through a Web site, dontserveteens.gov, which is being sponsored by a coalition of public and private sector organizations, including the Federal Trade Commission, the nation’s consumer protection agency.

Practical Steps To Take

Among the tips found on dontserveteens.gov are:

- Tell your teen the minimum legal drinking age is 21, and that drinking can cause serious health and safety consequences—as well as legal consequences for the person who provides the alcohol.
- Keep track of the alcohol in your home. Make sure teens can’t get to it without your knowledge.
- Talk to your kids about how to refuse a drink and what to say if they encounter pressure.
- Be frank about telling other parents that you don’t want people serving alcohol to your teen or condoning teen drinking.
- Get together with the parents of your teen’s friends. Let them know that teen drinking comes with unacceptable risks and that you do not want—or expect—anyone to allow your teen to drink alcohol.
- Talk to adults who host teen parties. Let them know that 86 percent of parents support the



Research indicates more than 25 percent of high school seniors don’t drink alcohol and many say that share can get even bigger if adults do their part.

legal drinking age and 96 percent of adults agree that it is not okay to serve alcohol to someone else’s teen.

- Talk to managers at restaurants, recreation areas, community centers and other places teen parties are held. Tell them the parents in your community do not want their teens to have access to alcohol.

- Let local law enforcement know that you are all for active policing of noisy teen parties. A noisy party may signal alcohol use; you will ask them to check it out.

- Tell local alcohol retailers that you don’t mind waiting while they check ID’s before selling alcohol.

For more information on stopping teens’ easy access to alcohol, practical tips on talking to kids about alcohol and alcohol advertising, and what to say to neighbors and friends about serving alcohol to teens, visit dontserveteens.gov.

Did You Know?

A new national campaign to reduce underage drinking is focusing on the social sources that may provide teens with access to alcohol. The campaign’s centerpiece is www.dontserveteens.gov, a Web site which is being sponsored by a coalition of public and private sector organizations, including the Federal Trade Commission, the nation’s consumer protection agency. Parents and teens can visit the site to get more tips and information. For more information, visit www.dontserveteens.gov.

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